

Appl. No. 09/979,531  
Atty. Docket No. AA405  
Amdt. dated: September 30, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of 8/25/2004  
Customer No. 27752

### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 4 and 7 are now in the case. Claim 1 has been amended to recite the "consisting essentially of" language, to recite the conditioning step (per Claim 2, now cancelled) and to recite the bulk density of the product of the process. Basis is at page 10, line 12 [400 g/l] and page 16, line 12 [650 g/l]. Claim 4 has been amended to depend from Claim 1 and to clarify the language. It is submitted that all amendments are fully supported, and entry is requested.

### Formal Matters

For the record, there are no objections or rejections under §112 outstanding.

### Rejections Under 35 USC 103

All claims stand rejected over U.S. 5,382,377, for reasons of record at pages 3-4 of the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections on this basis, to the extent they may apply to the claims as now amended.

Previous Remarks/Arguments in support of patentability continue to apply with regard to '377, but will not be repeated herein, for the sake of brevity.

As disclosed in '377, the process therein produces "detergents in the form of portioned pressings." See Column 2, lines 43-44. (Apparently, these are what is more commonly termed "noodles.") Such "portioned pressings" are prepared by forcing the compositions through a perforated die to form strands. See Column 2, lines 49-50 and Col. 5, lines 39, 56 and 64. The extruded strands are then subjected to various processing stages, resulting in granules.

Whatever happens in '377, that process – which is "crucially determined by the working pressure during extrusion" (Col. 7, lines 56-57) – yields detergent compositions having "apparent densities well above 700 g/l, preferably above 750 g/l and, more particularly, in the range from about 800 to approximately 1000 g/l . . ." (Col. 7, lines 59-62.)

In sharp contrast to '377, the presently-claimed process does not employ any step (such as the extrusion step of '377) that would lead to such a dense product. Rather, the process claimed herein yields products in the 400-650 density range. To further emphasize this point, Claim 1 now recites the "consisting essentially of" language.

In short, while '377 employs processing steps that ultimately yield a highly dense product, the process herein is designed to yield products of low-to-moderate densities. Therefore, it is submitted that the process herein is distinct from, and non-obvious over, the process of '377. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection on this basis are therefore requested.

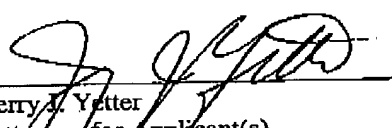
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In light of the foregoing, early and favorable action on Claims 1, 4 and 7 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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